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Map of American Hist

Oct 1891

THE ST. CROIX OF THE NORTHEASTERN BOUNDARY

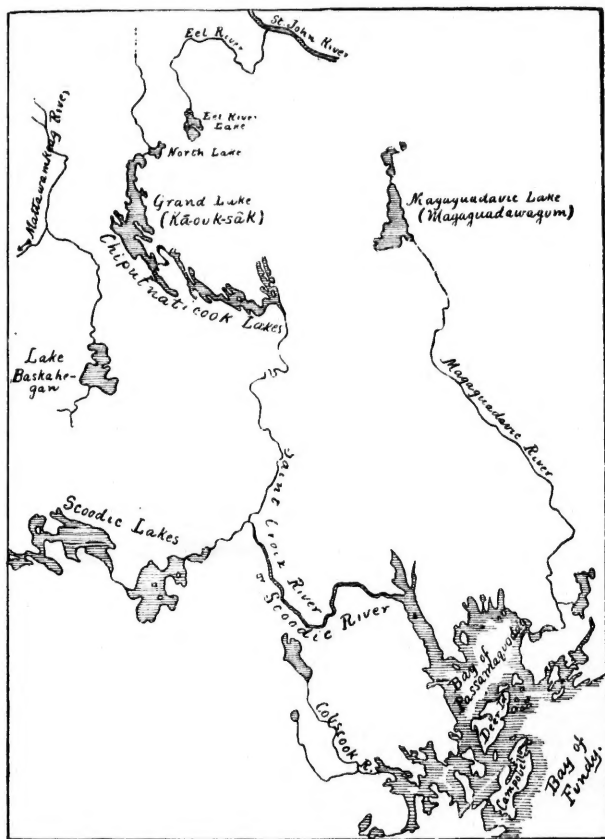
Although the northeastern boundary of the United States has long been settled as a national question, there is still the greatest difference of opinion as to the course the line should have taken if, instead of following the compromise line finally adopted in 1842, it had been run in accordance with the treaty of 1783. Some points indeed in this already voluminous discussion can never be settled, and the last words upon them will probably not have been written until the last amateur historian ceases to write.

There is, however, at least one point in connection with this boundary, and that a point of no small importance, which, though capable of final and most satisfactory settlement, has, curiously enough, been persistently overlooked by all who have written upon the subject. We refer to the question of the identity of the river St. Croix of Mitchell's map, the river chosen by the negotiators of 1783 as the beginning of the boundary between the British dominions and those of the United States. This river has been held by all United States writers to be the present Magaguadavic, and by all British writers to be the present St. Croix, the river which actually was chosen and does form the boundary in that region.

Briefly told, the position ~~of the river St. Croix~~ in the controversy is this: The treaty of 1783 declared that the river St. Croix is to form the boundary from its mouth to its source, and from the latter point it is to be continued by a due north line. No further description or localization of the river was given; it was not even stated that it was the old St. Croix of De Montb's settlement in 1604, and of various early grants, that was meant, though it would seem a fair inference that it was intended for the same. But the very year after the treaty was signed doubt arose as to the position of the St. Croix. The Passamaquoddy Indians had testified as early as 1764 that the river known to them as the St. Croix was the Magaguadavic, and the testimony had been repeated to different surveyors.* The negotiators of the treaty were asked what map had been used, and answered that John Mitchell's map of 1755 was the one used, and that the St. Croix marked upon it was the river chosen as the boundary. This map, however, was

* *American State Papers*, Vol. I, p. 91. Kilby, *Eastport and Passamaquoddy*, etc. No writer appears to have commented on the fact that the value of the testimony of the Indians in fixing the St. Croix of Mitchell's map is quite negated by the fact that the Scoddie, or modern St. Croix, has also been called St. Croix from the very earliest times, as no person whatever doubts. Indeed, contemporary maps show two rivers called St. Croix falling into Passamaquoddy.

too inaccurate to settle the question. [Compare the two first maps.] It marks two rivers emptying into Passamaquoddy, that to the west called Passamacadie, and that to the east, St. Croix. The latter of these United States writers have always contended must be the Magaguadavic, especially since it is called St. Croix by the Indians, and the former must be the modern St. Croix or Scoodic. British writers, on the other hand, have held that the eastern river was the present St. Croix (the Magaguadavic not being marked), and the western river was the Cobscook. The question at once became a burning one, and demanded immediate settlement. Accordingly commissioners were appointed, and in 1798 they decided that the river called St. Croix or Scoodic was the true St. Croix, and should form the boundary. This decision they based, not on the identification of the St. Croix of Mitchell's map (that point they did not decide), but upon the discovery of remains of De Mont's settlement, which placed it beyond all controversy forever that this was the ancient St. Croix of French settlement and early grants. Their decision led to the choice of the Scoodic as the boundary, which, so far, was satisfactory to the



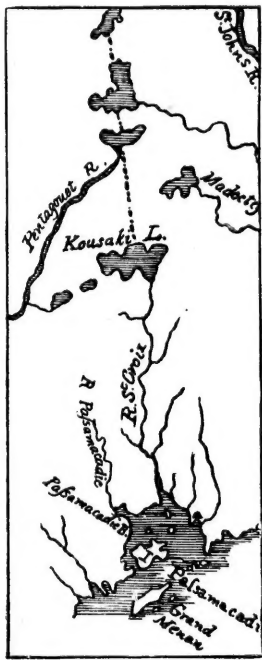
MODERN MAP OF THE ST. CROIX REGION.

British. But the people of the United States were far from satisfied, and they continued to claim that the St. Croix of Mitchell's map, not the ancient St. Croix of the French, should form the boundary, and Mitchell's St. Croix they still held to be the Magaguadavic.* This is their whole contention in brief: The St. Croix of Mitchell's map was chosen as the boundary by the commissioners, and whatever river Mitchell's St. Croix

was intended for, that river should be the boundary, whether it be the ancient St. Croix or not.

So imperfect is the topography of Mitchell's map in this region that, looking simply at the mouths of the rivers, it is impossible to tell for which of those of modern maps they are intended. It is a very curious fact that none of the disputants appear to have examined their sources. It will be seen by our second sketch that the St. Croix of Mitchell's map flows from a large lake called by him *Kousaki*. All the maps of this and a somewhat earlier period have this lake at the source of the St. Croix, and when it has a name at all, it is a form of this same word. Thus, Bellin in 1744, and D'Anville in 1755, have *Kaouakousaki*. If the identity of this lake can be settled, it will, of course, settle that of the river. Now, the Passamaquoddy Indians of to-day call Grand lake at the head of the St. Croix *Ka-ouk-sak*⁺ (pronounced *Kay-ouk-sahque*),⁺ which, in the locative form, would be *Ka-ouk-sak-ook*. Mitchell's form of the word was clearly the last syllables of the form *Kaouakousaki*, used by Bellin in 1744.

of Miller
Kee-ok-gu'-sak.



EXTRACT FROM MITCHELL'S MAP
OF 1755.

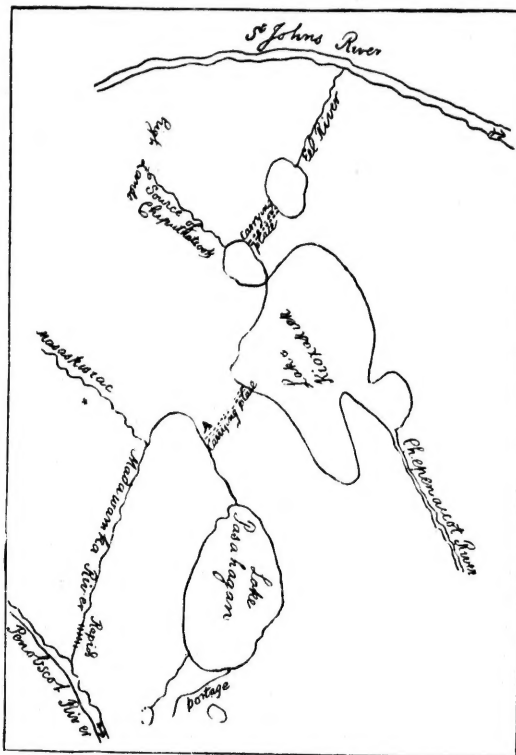
The resemblance between the modern *Ka-ouk-sak-ook*, and the old *Ka-ou-ak-ou-sak-i* is striking, the more especially when it is remembered that the two words are written one hundred and fifty years apart by men of different nations. On the other hand, the Passamaquoddies call the lake at the head of the Magaguadavic by a very different name. We have not its exact modern form, but it is very like

* For instance, it has been laboriously argued by Hon. Mr. Washburne (in *Collections Maine Historical Society*, Vol. VIII). Winsor's *America* (VII, p. 173) takes the same ground: "If the testimony of Mitchell's map was worth anything, there was no question that the easterly or Magaguadavic river (Mitchell's St. Croix) was the river intended by the treaty." Kilby (*Eastport and Passamaquoddy*) and others adhere to the same view, and it is re-affirmed in the latest volume of the collections of the Maine Historical Society (Series 2, Vol. I, p. 189).

Magaguadawagum, a totally different word from that at the head of Mitchell's St. Croix. Indian place names are very permanent. Dozens of them could be cited in Maine, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia, which have hardly sensibly changed since the first exploration of the country.

In the face of this evidence it seems probable almost to certainty that the lake Kousaki and river St. Croix of Mitchell's map are the modern Grand lake and St. Croix river.

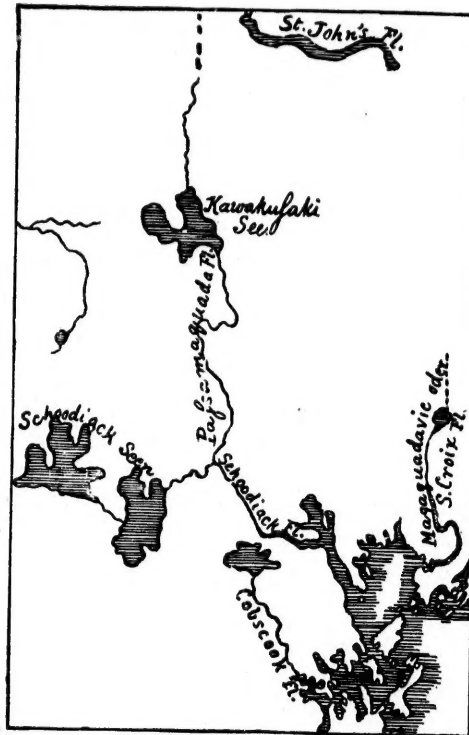
But happily we have other good evidence on the point. The sketch on this page is from a valuable manuscript map in possession of W. H. Kilby, author of *Eastport and Passamaquoddy*, through whose kind permission we are enabled to reproduce it. The map was made in connection with the settlement of the St. Croix in 1798, and bears this indorsement: "This scetch was taken from one made on birch bark by Francis Joseph an Indian, with the assistance of other Indians, as also the above in-



MAP DRAWN BY AN INDIAN IN 1798.

formation at Pleasant Point May 8th, 1798, by us Thomas Millidge, Robt. Pagan." It will be noticed that on this map lake *Kioxakick* is the same as the modern Grand lake, as its position with reference to the St. John and Penobscot portages shows. This form of the word differs no more from those we have given than is to be expected in allowing for individual differences in hearing and writing the same Indian word.

In Sotzmann's map of Maine of 1797 and 1798, there is no mistaking the meaning of the *Kawakusaki*—it is applied to Grand lake at the head of the St. Croix river, though he naturally favored the American view, that the



EXTRACT FROM SOTZMANN'S MAP OF MAINE, 1798.

St. Croix of Mitchell's map was the Magaguadavic. The latter part of this word is almost identical with the form used by Mitchell, and the entire word is very close to the French form of Bellin and D'Anville.

It should be noticed how the position of the lake confirms this testimony of names. In all of these maps it is shown as in close proximity to Eel river (called Medoctec on French maps) on the one hand, and to Baskahegan stream, an affluent of the Penobscot, on the other. This is strictly true of Grand lake, as in first map. One of the most traveled and best-known of the old Indian trails was by way of Eel river to North lake and Grand lake, and thence by the Baskahegan to the Penobscot.

The conclusion then seems clear that the claim of United

States writers that the St. Croix of Mitchell's map was the Magaguadavic, which therefore should have formed the boundary, must be abandoned; and it must be conceded that the St. Croix of De Mont's settlement, of Mitchell's map of 1755, of the treaty of 1783, of the commissioner's choice of 1798, and of the present boundary, are one and the same river, and that the boundary at this point at least is in accord with the treaty. This is a happy conclusion and one which should remove one cause, even though a slight one, of irritation between two peoples who should be bound together by the closest ties of social and political friendship.

W. F. Lawrence,